

# Utilities Coordinating Working Group

## Design Phase Utility Coordination Subcommittee Meeting

(Senate Concurrent Resolution 48)

Tuesday, September 3, 2109

DelDOT Administration Building, 800 Bay Road, Dover, DE  
Farmington/Felton Conference Room

### MEETING MINUTES

Approved 9/17/2019

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Osienski	State Representative	present
Laszlo Keszler	DPL Gas	present
Garth Jones	Chair, Chesapeake Utilities	present
Eric Cimo	Dept of Transportation Utilities Engineer	present
William Whitaker	Delmarva Power Corporation	present
Troy Dickerson	Delaware Electric Cooperative	present
Mark Parker	Eastern Shore Natural Gas	present
Alan Marteney	Century Engineering/ACEC-DE	present
Wayne Tyler	Artesian Water Company	not present
Tony Rutherford	Delaware Electric Cooperative	not present
Ray Ronault	Exelon-DPL	present
George Zang	Verizon	present
Adam Gould	Artesian Water	present
Rick Kerfoot	Comcast	present

OTHERS PRESENT: Meaghan Barna (DelDOT), Nicole Majeski (DelDOT), Jim Ryan (CWA), Aimee String (DelDOT), Caroline Trueman (FHWA), Mike Watson (CWA)

- I. Welcome and Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Garth Jones. The committee members introduced themselves.
- II. Old Business: The group agreed moving forward those present would comprise the subcommittee, and any additional attendees interested in participating are welcome at future meetings. The subcommittee agreed to meet every two weeks as they begin their work, and later reduce the meeting schedule if they find it is not needed.
- III. New Business: The goals of the Utilities Coordinating working group, and associated subcommittees, were reviewed. The purpose is to improve the collaborative working relationship, and provide better service delivery to all respective customers. The committee's recommendations are due January 1, 2020. Mr. Jones noted this is an

effort to make recommendations and see how the process can be improved. Eric Cimo acknowledged the challenges on the side of the utility companies, as well as DelDOT, and emphasized DelDOT's willingness to make the necessary changes and improvements.

The group discussed the current time frame for the survey phase of the utility coordination process. Currently DelDOT requests a response from the utility company within 30 days of initial inquiry. Mr. Cimo reviewed the survey phase and explained we cannot start a design until DelDOT identifies existing infrastructure. After lengthy discussion, the committee agreed 30 days was an appropriate amount of time for the utility companies to provide a response at this phase, with the understanding that if the utility company is unable to meet this deadline they will notify DelDOT of same.

Identification and submission of property right documents were also covered as part of the survey plan phase discussion. While DelDOT usually performs title searches for any parcels within a project area, these searches only go back 60 years. Some utility companies have property right documents that are older than that. It is the utility companies' responsibility to provide documentation of property rights (easements, signed agreements, deeds, etc.) to DelDOT as part of the design process. After lengthy discussion, the committee agreed that 60 days was an appropriate amount of time for utility companies to provide this documentation. It was also generally agreed that this timeframe will start upon DelDOT sending the survey plans to utility companies.

The subcommittee discussed the possibility of an existing technology that could help the process. It was noted the use of color coded plans has been identified as a best practice. Mr. Cimo explained this could easily be done. Increasing accountability was also discussed by the group. Members suggested increasing the sense of ownership may help in meeting goals and deadlines. All agreed this was a good idea, however it would require commitment from all of the utility companies.

The subcommittee established goals for moving forward. Mr. Cimo emphasized this was the opportunity to review the process and ensure the current process makes the most sense. He further stated if there is a way to tweak the process for better overall results, the committee should focus on that.

The committee agreed upon the following goals of the subcommittee:

1. Review the DelDOT Plan Development and Utility Coordination Milestones
2. Review the Overall Process
3. Suggest Process Improvements
4. Establish Accountability Measures

The subcommittee agreed establishing a method of accountability is vital. The group discussed the option of compensation for work, however Mr. Cimo noted that other

states have done this and continue to have the same issues. DelDOT would not be interested in paying for the same results. The option of using contractors could be considered, but there would need to be performance measures associated. Other methods of accountability discussed could include establishing penalties, such as fines or holding utility permits, for not meeting performance goals.

IV. Action Items/Future Meetings: The subcommittee will meet every two weeks. The next meeting will be held September 17, 2019.

V. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

VI. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.